

Claims

1. An arrangement for enclosing at least a part of an object, comprising an elastically deformable sleeve and a support by which the sleeve is held in a deformed state such that removal of the sleeve from one end of the support allows the sleeve to recover around and thereby to enclose an object (present in use), characterised in that an initiating part of the sleeve remote from the said one end is arranged such that the deformation of that initiating part may be locally relaxed initially in isolation from the remainder of the sleeve, the arrangement being such that the local relaxation provides an impetus that facilitates or causes the said removal of the sleeve from the said one end of the support.
2. An arrangement according to claim 1, in which a holding portion of the sleeve remote from the said one end of the support and beyond the said initiating part of the sleeve is in a more relaxed state than the initiating part of the sleeve, the relatively relaxed state of the holding portion of the sleeve at least contributing to the holding of the initiating part of the sleeve, and consequently also the remainder of the sleeve, in the deformed state.
3. An arrangement according to claim 2, in which the local relaxation of the deformation of the initiating part of the sleeve may be caused by a deformation of the said holding portion of the sleeve.
4. An arrangement according to any preceding claim, in which the initiating part of the sleeve is held by the support in a state of greater deformation than that of the remainder of the sleeve.
5. An arrangement according to claim 4, in which the greater deformation of the initiating part of the sleeve is caused by a protrusion and/or a depression of the support.
6. An arrangement according to claim 5, in which the protrusion is in the form of a flange and/or the depression is in the form of a groove.

7. An arrangement according to claim 5 or claim 6, in which the protrusion and/or the depression is movable with respect to the remainder of the support, to cause or allow the local relaxation of the initiating part of the sleeve.
8. An arrangement according to any preceding claim, further comprising a retaining member attached to the sleeve such that releasing the retaining member from the sleeve causes or allows the local relaxation of the initiating part of the sleeve.
9. An arrangement according to any preceding claim, in which the sleeve is hollow and arranged to enclose at least part of an object by encircling it.
10. An arrangement according to claim 9, in which the sleeve is generally in the shape of a round or oval tube.
11. An arrangement according to claim 9 or claim 10, in which the sleeve, in its relaxed state, comprises a plurality of sections of differing shapes and/or sizes and/or configurations, each section arranged to enclose a respective section of the object.
12. An arrangement according to any one of claims 9 to 11, in which all or part of the support is located inside the sleeve.
13. An arrangement according to any preceding claim, in which the support is hollow.
14. An arrangement according to any preceding claim, in which the object is present and is an elongate object.
15. An arrangement according to claim 14, in which the elongate object comprises one or more electrical or communications cables.

16. An arrangement according to any preceding claim, in which the sleeve is formed from an elastomeric polymer material.
17. An arrangement according to any preceding claim, in which the support is formed from a polymer material.
18. An arrangement according to any preceding claim, in which the deformation of the sleeve comprises expansion of the sleeve.
19. An arrangement according to claim 4 or any claim dependent thereon, in which the state of greater deformation of the initiating part of the sleeve comprises a stretched and/or expanded state.
20. An arrangement according to any preceding claim, in which the support has a shape that facilitates the removal of the sleeve from the support once the initiating part of the sleeve has been locally relaxed.
21. An arrangement according to claim 20, in which the support is tapered to facilitate the removal of the sleeve therefrom.
22. An arrangement according to any preceding claim, in which the support carries lubricant material that facilitates the removal of the sleeve from the support once the initiating part of the sleeve has been locally relaxed.
23. An arrangement according to any preceding claim, in which the removal of the sleeve from the support is substantially automatic once the initiating part of the sleeve has been locally relaxed.
24. A kit of parts for assembling an arrangement according to any preceding claim, comprising the elastically deformable sleeve and the support.
25. A method of assembling a kit according to claim 24, comprising deforming the sleeve and holding the sleeve in its deformed state by the support.

26. A method according to claim 25 when dependent upon claim 4, further comprising the step of deforming the initiating part of the sleeve to a greater degree than that of the remainder of the sleeve, and holding the initiating part of the sleeve in its state of greater deformation by means of a suitable projection or other formation of the support.

27. A method of enclosing an object by means of an arrangement according to any of claims 1 to 23, comprising:

- (i) placing the arrangement over the object;
- (ii) locally relaxing the initiating part of the sleeve; and
- (iii) causing or allowing the sleeve to be removed from the support and to recover and thereby to enclose the object.

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